

every thing being in readiness for the design he had formed, he proposed to carry it into execution in the night. He took the bag which contained the body of the sheep, and put it on his son's shoulders, whom he also instructed what to say upon the occasion.

The young gentleman knocked at the door of one of his fifty friends, who opened it, and demanded the subject of his visit. "Tis in misfortunes only, replied the son of the merchant, that we can have an opportunity of proving our friends. I have often told you of the enmity that has subsisted between my family and that of a noble lord. Chance brought us together, in a retired place; hatred induced us both to draw our swords; I ran him through the body, and he expired at my feet. Fearing that the officers of justice should pursue me. I have brought his body, which is in the bag on my shoulder, and entreat the favour of you to let me conceal it in your house till the clamour shall a little subside."

"My house is too small, replied his friend, with an air of chagrin and embarrassment, it will hardly contain the living that inhabit it, and therefore I cannot find room for the dead. Besides, continued he, every one is acquainted with the hatred that subsisted between you and the nobleman whom you have killed, and therefore they will readily conclude, that you  
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are the author of his death: and as it is publicly known that we are particular friends, they will naturally come to search my house: it would do you no service for me to plunge myself into your misfortune, and all the good I can do you is to keep the secret."

The young man made several trials, but to no purpose; at length despairing of success with this ingrate, he went successively to all the fifty persons from whose friendship he had promised himself every thing he should ask, and fifty times he received the same kind of treatment.

"You see, my son, said the merchant to him, how little we can rely upon mankind! What is become of the zeal of those, whose praises you have so pompously dwelt upon? See how they desert you when you have need of their assistance. I will now shew you the difference between one friend that I have found, and the fifty which you have procured."

He then went to the door of the person, whom he had mentioned to his son as a model of perfect friendship, and told him the pretended misfortune that had happened to his son.

"Oh! thrice happy day, cried the old man, that furnishes me with an opportunity of shewing my attachments to you; by relying upon me, you make me happy; my house is wholly